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INFO RUEHJS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 0143
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SUBJECT: NORTH MALUKU: CONTINUING GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION UNCERTAINTY
TRIGGERS EXPLOSION

REF: A. SURABAYA 16 (CLASH IN CENTRAL MALUKU)

[1](#)B. SURABAYA 14 (SULTAN OF TERNATE AS MEDIATOR) AND PREVIOUS

This Message is Sensitive But Unclassified. Please Protect Accordingly.

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: On February 11, a low-explosive, hand-made bomb exploded outside the Ternate residence of the head of the North Maluku High Court. There were no reports of injuries. Although no group has claimed responsibility, the bomb was reportedly an attempt to put pressure on local officials responsible for a recount in the disputed gubernatorial election. While demonstrations to date have been peaceful, local observers are concerned that protests could turn "chaotic." Also on February 11, in Jakarta, the "chairman" of the North Maluku Election Commission was arrested after announcing incumbent governor Thaib Armyn had won the recount. End Summary.

Low-Explosive Bombs in Ternate

[1](#)2. (U) According to press reports, a low-explosive, home-made bomb exploded in front of the garage at the official residence of Kamaruddin Kurip, the head of the North Maluku High Court, early on Monday, February 11, 2008. There were no reports of injuries; two nearby cars suffered minimal damage. Kurip and his wife were reportedly in Jakarta at the time of the explosion. A similar bomb was discovered in front of the North Maluku Governor's office, but did not explode. The police and Indonesian military (TNI) are conducting an investigation into the incident. There have been no claims of responsibility

[1](#)3. (SBU) A North Maluku police contact told ConGen Surabaya that police are continuing to investigate the incident to identify the perpetrator and the motive. They believe that both bombs were meant as a threat from those parties disappointed by recent court decisions on the disputed North Maluku gubernatorial election. As of 1530 local time February 12, Ternate is calm. The North Maluku police are preparing for a series of demonstrations in coming days protesting Jakarta's involvement in North Maluku's election.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Local academic and media contacts told ConGen Surabaya that both incidents were an attempt to put pressure on Kurip, who is the senior provincial judicial official charged with implementing the January 23, 2008, Supreme Court ruling, which determined that the North Maluku Election Commission (KPUD) -- not the National Election Commission -- had jurisdiction to

decide the winner of gubernatorial election (Surabaya 14). More than 100 followers of Abdul Gafur, whose victory had been nullified by the Supreme Court's decision, had peacefully demonstrated in front of the Governor's Office on February 11 to protest the announcement by the KPUD that incumbent Thaib Armyn won. Local observers expressed concern that similar demonstrations could easily become "chaotic."

Meanwhile, in Jakarta...

15. (SBU) Alwi Sagaf, Director of "Diahi" radio station in Ternate, told us that the people of North Maluku are tired of the prolonged dispute. Neither candidate enjoyed much popular support. He explained that Thaib Armyn's performance as governor had been poor, while Abdul Gafur was perceived as an old-time Golkar party functionary. Alwi added that he had heard from sources within the Governor's office that acting Governor Timbul Sugianti had discovered many financial irregularities associated with Thaib's administration.

16. (U) According to press reports, Jakarta police arrested Rahmi Husien, the "non-active" chairman of the North Maluku KPUD, immediately after he announced the results of the KPUD's recount on February 11. He was reportedly accused of illegal activity and giving false testimony during the election dispute trial. Abdul Hafis Anshari, the chairman on the National Election Commission, told reporters that the KPUD's recount was illegitimate because Rahmi Husien was no longer an "active" member of the KPUD. In addition, the local election monitoring body (panwasda) did not attend the recount.

MCCLELLAND